

In the Claims

1-19. (Cancelled)

20. (Currently Amended) A connecting element for a spinal fixing system that connects at least two implantable connection assemblies comprising: ~~a flexible part comprising~~ a cable comprising at least one elastic strand at least partly surrounded by and coaxial with a flexible polymer envelope to form a flexible part of the connecting element; and a rigid part having a tapered cavity that at least partly receives the cable, the cavity having a tapered portion with a widened zone proximal to an end receiving the cable and a narrowed zone distal to the end receiving the cable such that the tapered portion receives a portion of the flexible polymer envelope.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 20, wherein the cavity is a through cavity or a blind cavity.

23. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 22, wherein the cavity is configured to cooperate with the cable.

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 20, wherein the flexible part is fixed to the rigid part by adhesive bonding, crimping or welding.

26. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 20, wherein the cable comprises at least one layer of at least 6 strands, the strands being distributed around a central strand.

27. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 20, wherein the cable comprises two successive layers of strands disposed around a central strand, the first

layer of strands surrounding the central strand comprising 6 strands, the second layer of strands surrounding the first layer comprising 12 strands.

28. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 26 or claim 27, wherein the strands constituting the layer or layers comprises strands twisted around the central strand.

29. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 26 or claim 27, wherein the strands of the layer or layers are formed from a material different from that of the central strand.

30. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 26 or claim 27, wherein the central strand has a diameter different from that of strands of the layer or layers.

31. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 26 or claim 27, wherein the strands of the layer or layers are made of titanium or stainless steel, or titanium-nickel alloy.

32. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 20, wherein the cable comprises a tubular central strand.

33. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 20, wherein the cable comprises a central strand is formed from an alloy of nickel-titanium, titanium, stainless steel or polymer.

34. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 33, wherein the central strand is made from PEEK or polyurethane.

35. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 20, wherein the envelope is made from polyurethane.

36. (Previously Presented) The connecting element according to claim 20, wherein the envelope is made from PEEK.

37. (Currently Amended) A connecting element for a spinal fixing system that connects at least two implantable connection assemblies comprising: ~~a flexible part comprising~~ a cable comprising at least one elastic strand at least partly surrounded by and coaxial with a biocompatible fabric envelope to form a flexible part of the connecting element; and a rigid part having a ~~tapered~~ cavity that at least partly receives the cable, the cavity having a tapered portion with a widened zone proximal to an end receiving the cable and a narrowed zone distal to the end receiving the cable such that the tapered portion receives a portion of the flexible polymer envelope.

38. (Previously Presented) A spinal fixing system comprising at least two implantable connection assemblies connected by at least one connecting element according to claim 20.